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THE VALLEY PATRIOT

"Congress shall make no law..."

2004

10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION!

2014

valleypatriot.com

A FREE MONTHLY JOURNAL OF NEWS, COMMENTARY AND EVENTS, SERVING MA & NH

MARCH, 2014
VOLUME 11, ISSUE 3
Edition 125



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CELEBRATING 10 YEARS!

March 21, 2104
Lawrence Firefighter's Relief In

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

7:30PM - 9:30PM

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WELCOME: TOM DUGGAN

*SCHOLARSHIPS

*VALLEY PATRIOT GOOD WILL AMBASSADOR AWARD

*VALLEY PATRIOT EDITOR'S CHOICE AWARD

SPEAKER: JEFF KATZ

*VALLEY PATRIOT HERO AWARD

*VALLEY PATRIOT PRESIDENT'S AWARD

*VALLEY PATRIOT 1ST AMENDMENT AWARD

*OFFICER TOM DUGGAN SR. LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD

(Announcements)

PERFORMANCE: ANDRES (DRAMATIK) GONZALES

SPEAKER: DIANA DIZOGGIO & LOCAL DIGNITARIES

(BREAK TO ANNOUNCE RAFFLE WINNERS)

VENTRILOQUIST AL GETLER ... YES, THAT AL GETLER!

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PERFORMANCE: PROSPECT HILL

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GOOD NIGHT! AFTER PARTY AT THE BAR!

In 2004 we called upon the community to come to us and tell the real news stories that the other newspapers refused to tell. Ten Years Later ... LOOK WHAT YOU HAVE ACHIEVED!!

OUR VOICE IS YOUR VOICE: *The Valley Patriot welcomes letters to the editor on any topic. We also welcome column/article submissions from elected officials, neighborhood associations, community organizers and news makers. Our mission is to give readers the unique opportunity to receive important information from those who are driving important public issues without the "creative editing" policy employed by most newspapers. Submissions from guest columnists/writers in The Valley Patriot are published without the filtered agenda of an editorial board. If you would like to write a column, letter or article for The Valley Patriot, please e-mail us at: ValleyPatriot@aol.com*

Page 3, Valley Patriot - March 2004

VALLEY PATRIOT AWARDS

VALLEY PATRIOT GOOD WILL AMBASSADOR AWARD

Tonight we honor two people who have made incredible contributions to the Valley Patriot above and beyond what is expected of anyone. Both of these individuals have gone out on their own, with no direction from The Valley Patriot, and scored big stories, photos, interviews or news tips, and/or represented the newspaper in an outstanding way.

VALLEY PATRIOT EDITORS CHOICE AWARD

The Valley Patriot has enjoyed publishing thousands of submissions by our readers since 2004. So many great columns, letters and news stories have graced our pages from guest contributors The Valley Patriot's ten year success story is a testament to you, our readers. This year we honor two writers who have taken the high road in public discourse while also taking very bold stands on some of the most important issues that shape our lives.

Last Year's Winners: Joe D'Amore and Lonnie Brennan.

VALLEY PATRIOT HERO VETERAN AWARD

Because honoring Veterans is so much a part of what we do at The Valley Patriot, tonight we honor two people who themselves honor our hero service men and women here at home. Honoring our veterans and recognizing their incredible sacrifices is one of the most important things we do at The Valley Patriot. Tonight we honor two veterans who not only served their country overseas but continued to serve their country when they came home. Whether it is public service, volunteering in the community or helping other veterans here at home, tonight's recipients are men who embody what service and sacrifice are all about. *Last Year's Winners:* David Swarbrick, John Lenotte

VALLEY PATRIOT PRESIDENTS AWARD

Tonight we honor two people with our Valley Patriot President's Award. They were personally chosen by Valley Patriot President Tom Duggan for their unique contribution they make to the newspaper every month. Despite what our detractors say about us, our readers know that we are a newspaper that values free speech and diversity of opinion above all else. This award is normally reserved for someone who goes above and beyond the call of duty to help in the operations of the newspaper, but we all know that Christine Morabito and Dan Selenius would win this every year with that definition so we re-purposed the award to honor those who contribute material that stands out in either quality or the impact it has on our readers. *Last Year's Winners:* Christine Morabito, Dan Selenius

*VALLEY PATRIOT 1ST AMENDMENT PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

This year we start a new tradition. This award is given to individuals who show with their actions that they value the 1st Amendment to the Constitution. Winner of this award have made a significant difference in holding public officials accountable, fought for transparency in government and gone above and beyond the call of duty to defend and protect our right of free speech, a free press, freedom of religion and/or being a whistle-blower. They are or have taken ACTION, bold action to make sure the public is more informed about what their government leaders and representatives are up to. Without individuals like this on the front lines in the war against a free speech and a free press our freedoms would be lost.

OFFICER TOM DUGGAN SR. LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD

On March 16, 1990, Lawrence Police Officer Tom Duggan Sr. lost his life in the line of duty. He was a man who loved being a police officer and lived his life responding to cries for help in the community. While he worked on many major cases and high profile crimes, he always said that it was the day to day work he did on and off duty to help people in small ways that really made his job worth doing.

This year we honor his service and sacrifice with "The Valley Patriot, Officer Tom Duggan Sr., Law Enforcement Award." The award is given to members of public safety (police or fire) and/or 1 civilians who honors the service and personal sacrifice police officers and firefighters make every day. Officer Duggan believed that those little extra things we do in life to help others ... make the biggest differences in people's lives at the end of the day. He also believed those little extra things helped us become better people, and make the world around us a better place.

Last Year's Winners: Scott Emerson, Wheelabrator and Methuen Police Officer Dan O'Connell

Valley Patriot Founders Ralph Wilbur,
Dr. Charles Ormsby & Tom Duggan

Our First North Andover High Scholarship Recipient

From 2005-2008 The Valley Patriot sponsored an after school journalism program at the Thomson Elementary School in North Andover to teach young students how to publish their school newspaper, "Tiger Times" which became "Tiger Prints."

4th and 5th grade students at Thomson learned the difference between a column and a news story, and wrote and edited their own publication.

Victoria Deshaies was one of our "Tiger Prints" kid reporters and is now graduating from North Andover High School. She has been accepted at Hofstra, University of Rhode Island, Sacred Heart University and University of Vermont. Good luck at college!



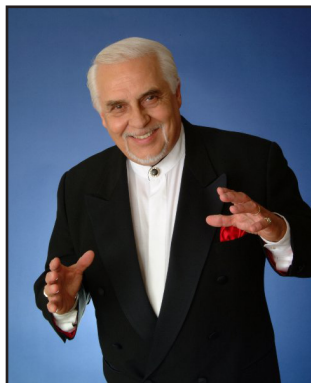
Victoria Deshaies, Class of '14



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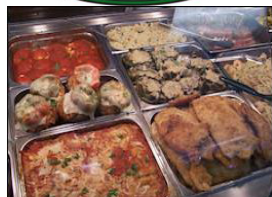
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Scholarships for Lawrence High School Seniors

When you support the Valley Patriot you help us give back to the community. This is the 5th year The Valley Patriot has been blessed enough to be able to grant college scholarships to Lawrence High School seniors through the Lawrence High School Alumni Association. Because of YOUR loyalty and support we have donated to scholarship programs for five graduating seniors from LHS. Tonight, because of your help we make that seven. PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS: 2010-Davante Jones, Franklin Pierce University, (\$100.00). | 2011-Crismelys Ruiz, Lincoln Tech. Lowell - Med Asst., (\$200.00) | 2012-Ambar Hussein-Martinez, Northern Essex, (\$300.00)| 2013-Thalia Garcia, Westfield State University, (\$300.00): 2014, TBA.



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TONIGHT'S PARTICIPANTS

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ENTERTAINMENT: Bell-Air Music Productions (Rick Bellanti)
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GraceMarie & Joyce Tomaselli - Mangia

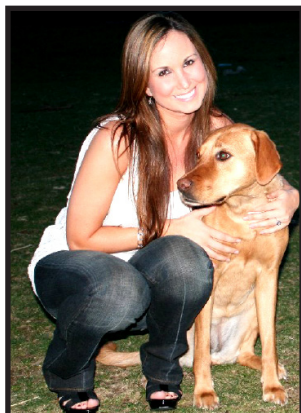
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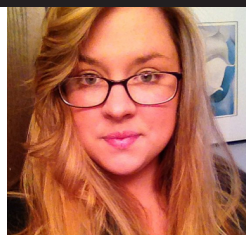
2014 Bash Host Committee



Pennie Hale



Tom Duggan



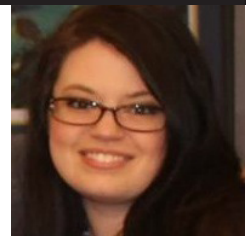
Megan Hale



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WHY CHOOSE



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Congratulations to The Valley Patriot Celebrating 10 Years!!

WELCOME AL GETLER TO THE VALLEY PATRIOT FAMILY

Al Getler is President and CEO of Ellie on Wheels Media, LLC and the host of "Lead or be Led - WebTV for Leaders".

Ellie on Wheels Media, LLC helps existing companies and start-ups build strong strategic direction and brand equity. Ellie on Wheels Media provides full media services to help brands succeed in social media, digital and traditional media marketing plan execution.

Ellie on Wheels Media is a part of the Duct Tape Marketing Consultant Network working closely with its creator, John Jantsch.

Ellie on Wheels Media - Leadership produces "Lead or be Led - Web TV for Leaders" with Gallo Productions, a web-based TV show about and for leaders. www.LeadorbeLed.com

Al blogs on leadership, marketing, personal branding and customer service subjects at www.algetler.com and is a sought after speaker.

Former Group Publisher of the North of Boston Media Group, Getler oversaw the vast growth of EagleTribune.com which included a mobile strategy resulting in tens of thousands of App downloads. He also created a partnership to add Eagle Radio, an online radio station that used the assets of a newspaper with the assets of radio. See the video below.

In order to create new streams of revenue, Getler led his staff to create a series of high-end regional magazines. With high profits and high quality, these award winning publications add to the traditional newspaper media mix.

Getler and his team are winners of numerous awards for the newspaper, website and magazine efforts.

Getler has worked in New England since 2004 when he worked with Boston Herald owner Pat Purcell. Previously he has been with Gannett, Thomson Newspapers, The Press of Atlantic City and North Jersey Media.



SUPPORT HB 2846 AND BRING PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE STATE'S PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

When Lawrence Mayor William Lantigua refused to turn over public documents to The Valley Patriot we took him to court. Two judges orders and two years later Lantigua was never held accountable for breaking the law. (UPDATE: Mayor Rivera has pledged to release them to the Valley Patriot). Because of the debacle, however, State Senator Kathleen O'Connor Ives submitted a bill on behalf of The Valley Patriot which would fine keepers of public records \$100 a day for each day they do not release documents in the allotted time. If passed, this bill would also reimburse anyone who has to take a public entity to court for refusing to turn over public records within ten days. CALL YOUR LEGISLATOR and tell them to support HB2846. Tell them public records belong to the public and those who conceal them must be held accountable!



THANK YOU VALLEY PATRIOT!

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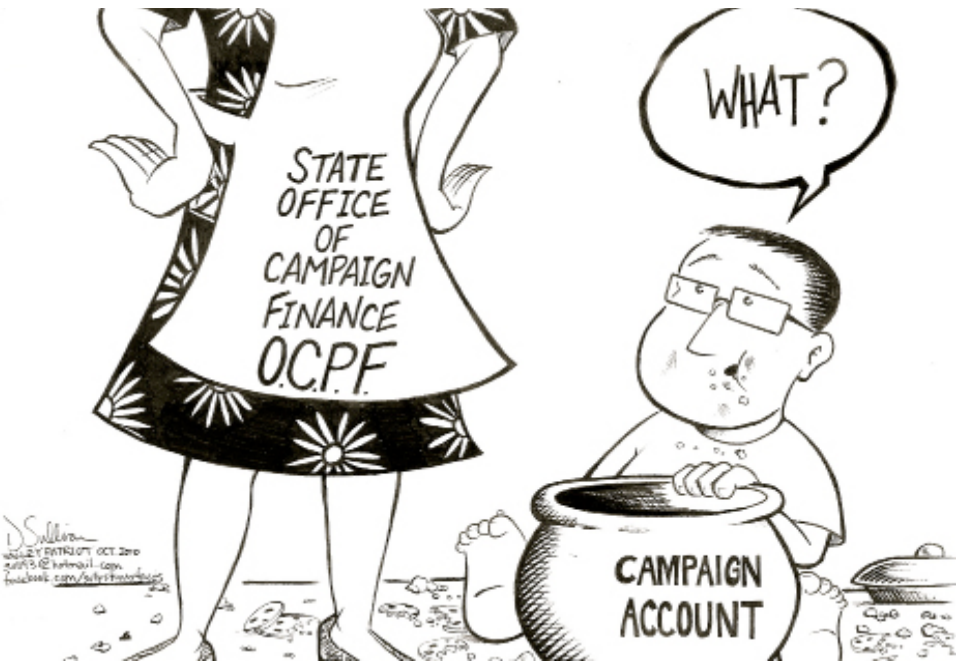
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OUR OWN CUSTOM CARTOONIST



David Sullivan of Dracut is an artist who makes a unique contribution to the newspaper every month. He takes local stories we are working on and draws an amazing cartoon relevant to the topics of the month. THANK YOU DAVE!



Happy 10Th Anniversary

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT ...



The Methuen Police Patrolman's Association & The Methuen Police Superior Officers Association

For the last ten years The Valley Patriot has shown an undying commitment to law enforcement and it has not gone unnoticed by those of us who wear the uniform. From the men and women of the Methuen Police Patrolman's Association and the Methuen Police Superior Officers Association we want to say **THANK YOU** to Tom Duggan and everyone at The Valley Patriot. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed by those of us who are charged with protecting and serving the public! Thank you for objectively reporting the truth in an industry that should take notes from your success.

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The Menorah Lighting That Almost Wasn't

Two years ago when our publisher found out that the annual lighting of the Grand Menorah was not going to take place in North Andover for lack of sponsors, he contacted Chabad Lubavitch Jewish Center of Merrimack Valley and offered to help keep the local tradition going. For the last two years the Valley Patriot has sponsored

the Grand Menorah Lighting on North Andover Common. Without our advertisers and our BASH sponsors the North Andover Common would have been dark during Chanukah. THANK YOU ALL!

A black and white photograph of a man, Ron Mushow, with a goatee and a necklace, wearing a t-shirt with a graphic. He is looking slightly to the side.

Ron Mushow
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The Valley Patriot

"Congress shall make no law..."

Volume 1, Issue 1

March 2004

16 Pages

Valley Patriot Exclusive!

School Committee Bills Taxpayers for Fine Dining

Tom Duggan

For the past three years members of the Lawrence School Committee have been billing the taxpayers for plush dining at the city's most expensive restaurant: One Mill Street.

Then School Committeemen Noah Shannon, Pedro Ace, Suzanne Picciello, Nancy Kennedy and current member George Gonzalez all dined with Superintendent Wilfredo Laboy and his staff after school board meetings running up tabs worth over \$1,200.00.

Documents obtained by The Valley Patriot show that state taxpayers treated members of the Lawrence School Committee to more than a dozen expensive meals between 2001-2003.

Meal reimbursement receipts show School board members helped themselves to veal, sirloin steak, calamari, pork chops, duck, steak salad, garlic shrimp, mussels, scallops, spinach chicken, assorted appetizers and other various menu items. The meals were then billed to the Lawrence Public Schools which receives 100% of it's funding from the state and federal government.

While Superintendent Laboy's \$156,000 a year contract does not include a meal allowance, he says that some of his expenses are reimbursable. "I don't have a meal allowance but it is accepted



"...the Ethics Commission should be informed about this. They should pay back every penny with interest and issue a written apology to the school children and the citizens of Lawrence."

Michael Sweeney
Lawrence School Committee

practice for me to be reimbursed for certain expenses as long as they are reasonable and sensible," he said.

School Committee members, on the other hand, do not have that luxury. According to the School Committee policy (B-18) "School Committee members shall receive no compensation for their services. However, upon submitting vouchers and supporting bills for expenses incurred in carrying out specific services previously authorized by the Committee, Committee members may be reimbursed from district funds." This never took place regarding meal receipts from One Mill Street.

Instead, some School Committee members took advantage of their position as

Continued on Page 8

Smith v. Smedile for N. A. Selectman

Valley Patriot Staff



While North Andover School Committeeman Al Perry has no challenger for his seat, Selectman Rosemary Smedile is facing a familiar face to the voters in her bid for reelection.

Joe Edward Smith, an engineer by trade and a union Democrat, says his campaign is about open government and representing issues important to the town voters. "There is a big difference between Ms. Smedile and myself," he said. "Before the voters decide who will represent them on March 30th it is important that they know what those difference are."

"I opposed the trash transfer station and Ms. Smedile supported it." Smith also said Smedile supported leasing half the airport land adding, "the people of North Andover clearly wanted it sold off. It is important to represent the people of the town and act on their behalf." Smith says he opposes \$95,000 in raises for nonunion employees "especially at a time when we are talking about laying off fire

Continued on Page 13

Sullivan: "Absent All Auto Fraud, Insurance Rates Won't Go Down!"

Tom Duggan



"...if you call the Board of Insurance today and ask them... 'if the auto fraud goes away completely (in Lawrence), at what point will the rates go down?' They will tell you what they told me last week, they won't."

...Lawrence Mayor,

Michael J. Sullivan

Lawrence - Mayor Michael Sullivan says that even if police investigations are capable of eliminating all auto insurance fraud in the City of Lawrence, "auto insurance rates still won't go down."

Sullivan, touting the hard work of Police Chief John Romero and the Lawrence Police Department, said that the investigations into auto insurance fraud in Lawrence were producing startling results but added, "If you call the Board of Insurance today and ask, just for example, 'if the auto fraud goes away completely (in Lawrence) at what point will the rates go down?' What they will tell you is what they told me last week, they won't."

For years, State Legislators, previous mayors and police chiefs have been telling Lawrence residents that the high auto insurance rates in the city (the third highest in the state) are the result of insurance fraud. Sullivan says that simply isn't the case.

"What we are finding out is that, what will cause rates to go down (in Lawrence) is for the rest of the cities and towns in the state to tackle fraud in their communities as well. It would have to be a statewide effort. I think the insurance companies, years ago should have been doing the investigative work that the Lawrence police are doing this year."

Continued on page 7

Syndicated Columnists



Neil Cavuto

Page 4



Thomas Sowell

Page 14

ALSO INSIDE:

Rabbi Goldstein on "The Passion"



Page 15

2003 Police Line of Duty Deaths by Craig Floyd

Page 3

Profile of Andover School Candidates

Page 13

Dr. Charles Ormsby - Thinking Outside the Box

Page 3

Paying Attention!

Page 4

N. Andover Selectman Race, Smith v. Smedile

Page 5

Senior News/Senior Centers

Pages 10 & 11

...on TEN Years of AMAZING News Coverage



-Mike Gagliardi,
Local 175 Laborers' Union of North America

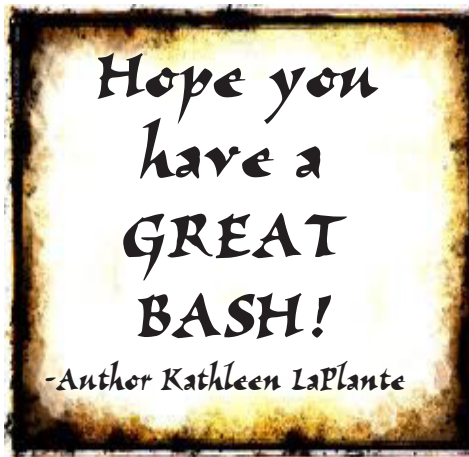


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For those observing Lent the Tomaselli sisters have prepared eggplant parmesian and manicotti the way you used to like it at Mangia's in Salisbury.



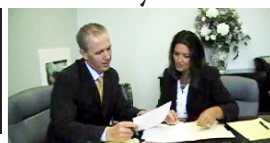
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